

# Becoming the Change We Want to See: Critical Study Abroad for a Tumultuous World

**Doug Reilly**

*Hobart and William Smith Colleges*

**Stefan Senders**

*University of Rochester*

## **Introduction: Critical Study Abroad**

The challenges we face as Americans are increasingly global in nature, and our youth must be well prepared for its future. Our national security, international economic competitiveness, and diplomatic efforts in working towards a peaceful society rest on our global competence and ability to appreciate languages and cultures throughout the world. The United States' capacity to lead in the twenty-first century demands that we school new generations of students in cultural and social realities beyond what they may have grown up with in the United States

Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL: 26 July 2006)

Study abroad has become, at least rhetorically, a core element in U.S. post-secondary education.<sup>1</sup> For those of us who practice study abroad, who have dedicated themselves to leading students, managing programs, or theorizing the role of study abroad in its relationship to the academy generally, the meaning of our work is powerfully shaped by rhetorical frames produced by college administrations and granting institutions. On one of the authors' campuses the phrase in circulation was "campus internationalization," and the buzzword was "global competency." These terms sound compelling initially, but without a critical definition the danger is that the rhetoric becomes an empty sales pitch.

In this essay we argue that we can no longer afford to allow study abroad to be reduced to such catch phrases. The world, we believe, is in dire shape—war is too common, environmental destruction too widespread, economic and political injustice too endemic—and requires action, not slogans. So what can or should study abroad *do*? And how might study abroad be responsive to the global crisis?

We propose a new model for understanding the work of study abroad, Critical Study Abroad. Critical Study Abroad is a structured way of framing our work with direct reference to the current state of the world, and it suggests concrete changes in the work of our programs. It rejects many of the assumptions of previous frames: in place of class-reproduction it offers class-analysis; in place of self-development through accumulation it offers self-development through commitment; in place of internationalism it offers a critical and global perspective; in place of “global competence” it offers global citizenship.

As we elaborate below, Critical Study Abroad requires that we reevaluate our knowledge production and our teaching, and more specifically, that we reconstitute the field in which study abroad operates.

## **U.S. Study Abroad: Historical and Rhetorical Perspective**

Study abroad is one of the current global cross-cultural vectors. Other forces at work in changing the shape of human geography include invasion, occupation, and forced migration, as well as trade, communication, global activism and educational exchange. The United States participates in this network of global exchanges in every way mentioned, exerting itself through its global network of military garrisons as well as other official and non-governmental programs like the U.S. Peace Corps, Fulbright, American Red Cross, USAID and USIA programs, and, of course, study abroad.

Study abroad (and the wider field of international educational exchange) is particularly interesting because it is currently viewed as a vital component of U.S. education, and because it is an oft-unacknowledged facet of U.S. diplomacy. The political intent of study abroad is often unspoken and is certainly contested. Some readers will not want to see study abroad in this light; however, by analyzing it as part of a complex whole we obtain insights that are otherwise unavailable.

Over the past century, several rhetorical frames or discourses have been used to justify the sojourn of U.S. students in foreign locations. For the purposes of this essay, we focus on three of these broad discourses: class reproduction, idealist internationalism and political internationalism. Although each discourse arose in a unique historical moment, elements of all three still shape the rhetoric used to describe contemporary study abroad programs.

### **Class Reproduction**

The idea that study abroad is a form of “Grand Tour,” a frame that we call *class reproduction*, remains strong. For Americans, study abroad has long

been conducted in the service of cultural acquisition, and the increase of social capital. Students, particularly women, have studied abroad in order to elevate their class status and to ensure that they would secure good marriages. Men, at least during the late nineteenth century, were motivated to study abroad by the prestige of German universities; by studying abroad, they could return to the United States with greater professional security.

By the early decades of the 20th century, study abroad began to take shape around the notion of “cultural immersion,” a discursive shift that emphasized the *pedagogical* value of the experience, as opposed to its *social* value. By the late 1920s a number of U.S. Colleges, including Delaware College, Marymount College, Smith College, and Rosary College, had functioning study abroad programs, all of which stressed “foreign language skills” and various articulations of “cultural immersion,” even while they continued to offer what Joan Elias Gore has paraphrased as “travel opportunities.”<sup>2</sup>

Through study abroad, students become more cosmopolitan and less parochial, more open and less prejudiced. Their tours, it is supposed, will make them more self-reliant, flexible, and sensitive to the opportunities of the moment. In this frame study abroad produces a mobile social class, one that views the world as opportunity and resource.

Study abroad, integrated into a widespread narrative of class reproduction, is also viewed as an activity that produces social capital; students who travel abroad are in some sense “ahead” of those who stay behind; their resumes are more imposing, their testimony more moving, their experiences and education more applicable. Study abroad, in other words, is an investment—for graduate school, for politics, for the business world. It is one of the few products that students can buy that seems to set them apart from the rest.

These two narratives, class reproduction and individual enrichment, mesh beautifully with the administrative imperative of most colleges—to bring in top students. Study abroad often forms an important part of the academic sales pitch, and it is a product that almost sells itself. On our campus, the study abroad program has recently been moved into a newly renovated building across the street from the admissions office. When students and their parents come to visit the campus, the “Center for Global Education” is only a few steps away, and admissions tour guides give it prominent attention. Like many programs, however, student demand outstrips the available resources. Moreover, study abroad serves a purpose that is not its own, and that is to glorify the college and to demonstrate to students and parents that their money can buy an exciting, broadening, and enriching experience. Moreover this

sales pitch reaches beyond the individual student, and the campus, to encompass the nation.

### **Idealistic Internationalism**

In the immediate post-war period, study abroad was embraced by many idealists who posed the movement as a step toward productive and peaceful international affairs and even as a step towards international understanding and peace building. We call this frame *idealistic internationalism*; this shift in emphasis is indicative of the dominant position of the U.S. after the war and the empowered sense of responsibility Americans felt on a global scale.<sup>3</sup> The dangers of the Cold War provided a sense of fresh urgency, and many believed that cultural exchange, including study abroad, could succeed where conventional politics had failed; cross-cultural understanding, driven by intimate experience, would ameliorate tensions that appeared to be pushing the world to the nuclear brink.

Idealistic internationalism is evident in the founding literature of many post-war organizations and institutions (the United Nations, the U.S. Peace Corps, the Fulbright and Marshall programs, and the Rotary Exchanges.) In 1956, President Eisenhower held a two-day conference on citizen diplomacy. Two organizations sprung from Eisenhower's claim that "peaceful relations between nations requires understanding and mutual respect between individuals": Sister City International and People to People International. Sister City, which pairs U.S. and foreign cities in partnerships and exchanges, is devoted to "promoting peace through mutual respect, understanding, & cooperation—one individual, one community at a time."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, People to People seeks "peace through understanding," and claims a universalism that can span different cultures ("everyone smiles in the same language").<sup>5</sup>

As William Hoffa points out in his recent history of study abroad, many of the internationalists also believed that, "if the values of American democracy had won the war, now was the time to help the rest of the world, former allies and foes alike, understand those values for the sake of continued peace."<sup>6</sup> This indicates that, like its imperial predecessors, the United States felt the weight of the civilizing imperative, an aspect of idealistic internationalism that continues to play out.

### **Political Internationalism**

Post-war geopolitics provided an instrumental motive for learning about other countries and cultures: winning the Cold War. The U.S. government began to view cross-cultural knowledge as a necessary ingredient in the successful application of power (hard or soft) in the international arena. Study

abroad, embedded in a wider intellectual project, was a boon to the national interest. We characterize this frame as *political internationalism*. During this period, the U.S. government became increasingly interested in supporting the growth of Area Studies programs on college campuses, a methodology with its roots in the early OSS/CIA intelligence community. The government stressed the need for highly educated experts in the diplomatic and intelligence corps, and Area Studies (and the study abroad programs that were embedded within these programs) were designed to provide it.<sup>7</sup>

Given that the Cold War was increasingly being fought in proxy wars among poorer nations, the U.S. government also became interested in the connections between economic development, information politics, and intercultural exchange. William Lederer and Eugene Burdick's 1958 novel *The Ugly American* captured the scene with its contrasting portrayals of ignorant, arrogant and ineffectual U.S. diplomats with a well-meaning, humble and skillful aid worker (the actual title character) who speaks the local language and connects with the community. This idea of human connections, a way of organizing and structuring the people-to-people approach of the previous period, would become an important tool in the wider foreign policy effort at containing Soviet influence. President Kennedy's administration fully embraced the argument, and the sentiment found its way into the creation of the Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps.<sup>8</sup>

The current "global war on terror" has given new and practical urgency to the political internationalist frame for study abroad. The understanding of other cultures has come to play an important part in security discourse. Particularly since the end of the Cold War the methods of diplomacy and espionage have changed. The new methodology, according to Fred Hitz, Inspector General of the CIA from 1990 through 1998, requires the interpretation of local knowledge, extended stays, language fluency, and authoritative interpretation—all signature aspects of the transcultural approach practiced in study abroad. This convergence has happened as study abroad has taken on renewed national importance.

It is crucial to note several things about the schema presented above. First, although presented roughly chronologically, elements of each have longer histories and continue to be evident in the rhetoric of study abroad. Second, there is a real and palpable tension between the idealist and political iterations of internationalism.<sup>9</sup> Third, from our vantage point in the post-9-11 period, the latter is supplanting the former and most of the language of international understanding and peace is now absent from study abroad programs.

## The Emergence of Global Competence

For many, the 2005 report of the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, *Global Competence and National Needs: One Million Americans Studying Abroad*, represents a powerful justification for study abroad. It sets the tone on the inside front cover by framing study abroad as a strategic response: “What nations don’t know can hurt them. The stakes involved in study abroad are that simple...For their own future and that of the nation, college graduates today must be internationally competent.” The report invokes “globalization and economic competitiveness,” “national security,” the 9-11 attacks, and states that “students and citizens are eager to take on the mantle of international leadership.”<sup>10</sup> It points to a growing conflict over oil supplies and reiterates the klaxon call that China is a waking giant, fulfilling for this decade the bogeyman role Japan occupied in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Lincoln Commission embraces a statement by NAFSA, the national professional association for international education, explicitly linking exchange and national security:

We no longer have the option of getting along without the expertise that we need to understand and conduct our relations with the world. We do not have the option of not knowing our enemies—or not understanding the world where terrorism originates and speaking its languages. We do not have the option of not knowing our friends—or not understanding how to forge and sustain international relationships that will enhance U.S. leadership and help our values prevail. [quoted in Lincoln Commission, 6]

The Lincoln Commission report is a clear reiteration of political internationalism. Here, the point of all exchange is to make the U.S. more secure by providing students with greater exposure to other peoples, languages, and cultures. Noticeably absent from the document is a single instance of the word *peace*.

Perhaps the many idealists in the field of international education view the report as a political but necessary lobbying effort toward the goal of increasing congressional funding for study abroad. As far as we know, there has been no outcry against this seeming militarization of the educational project. What is evident, however, is a widespread embrace of the call, echoed by the commission and many others, for “global competence” as an organizing educational principle. With the very best of intentions, colleges and universities have begun to re-craft their mission statements to emphasize “enhancing global competence,”

and as part of that change, they have increased their investment in study abroad programs, which have in turn found increasing student interest.

Global competence, stripped from the nationalist context in which it appears in the Lincoln report, sounds good: who would not support the development of competence, particularly in a world where incompetence, combined with hyper-specialization, appears to be widespread? Competence, however, with its embedded meanings of capacity, adequacy, and authority, and from its etymological roots in the Latin *competere*, or “competition,” suggests that it is about the ascendancy of the individual and her community. It is about creating a person who has capacity, who exercises authority, who is not at a loss—this new person is a new American. This authority may be employed for the creation of a more just global system, but may just as easily be applied to the national project of economic and strategic domination.

Most of us in study abroad would agree that the growth of the field, whatever its stated goals, is a positive trend. In this paper we argue that our goals and the ways we articulate them are material, not simply rhetorical. The field needs to re-imagine its place in geopolitics actively or risk being co-opted by nationalistic discourses. To that end, we reframe our work in terms of an ethos of “global responsibility and citizenship.” Critical Study Abroad openly reflects our commitment to constructive work and positive change, and yes, to peace. We hope that others in study abroad will use the ideas we present here to develop their own approaches to a new study abroad that is overtly responsible and critical.

Our argument is simple: The world and its inhabitants are in trouble; study abroad has something special to offer in the search for solutions; to realize the potential of Critical Study Abroad will require work and change and courage on all our parts, but the labor is both practical and necessary.

## **Study Abroad, the Progress Trap and Globalization of Crisis**

There is a sort of poverty of the spirit which stands in glaring contrast to our scientific and technological abundance... We have learned to fly the air like birds and swim the sea like fish, but we have not learned the simple art of living together as brothers.

Martin Luther King

We live in an age of increasing and technologically enhanced abundance. As boosters of industrial globalization routinely remind us, the “rising tide” is supposed to bring increased “wealth,” and increased consumption, to vast populations.

At the same time, our interest in and production of new weapons, poisons, strategies of attack and defense are steadily increasing. We are more coddled than ever—and we have never been more capable of killing ourselves, and our planet.

The past two centuries have rightly been celebrated as periods of remarkable human progress. Humans know more about the world than ever before, control more of its processes than ever, extract from it more wealth and substance than ever. But our success represents what Ronald Wright has called a “progress trap,” a dynamic in which “progress” attacks societies’ critical resources.<sup>11</sup> For example, the Romans, as their cities expanded, depleted the fertile soils and impoverished the provinces upon which they relied; the Anasazi cut down and burned trees faster than nature could replace them; the Sumerians leached their fields into deserts through over-irrigation. Here we recognize that our crises are not local, not national, not even hemispheric—they are global. No place and no one is excluded. Civilizations can and do end, and we, standing amidst the duly celebrated technological revolution of the 20th century, must contemplate the question: Have we set our own global “progress trap”?

At an increasing and unprecedented rate, humans are changing the complex biotic and climactic systems upon which life as we know it depends. On that there is no reasoned disagreement. The most powerful symptom of our multifaceted disruption of global ecosystems is the term “global warming,” or more precisely *accelerated global climate change*, a term that embraces a complex feedback loop with anthropogenic causes and unpredictable but worrisome consequences for life on Earth. Admittedly, many Americans cling to the idea that global climate change, like evolution, is “just a theory,” but that resistance is weakening under weight of the scientific evidence. We believe that study abroad needs to become an active participant in the analysis of our behavior and its effects on our climate, and in the search for responses to our environmental crisis.

The environmental crisis is but one of the bitter fruits of global industrialization; another is the extraordinary disparity between the rich and the poor, a gap—a chasm—that widens with increasing speed and ferocity. In 1998, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) reported that the world’s 225 richest people have a combined wealth equal to that of the world’s 2.5 billion poorest people.<sup>12</sup> The richest three people have more wealth than 48 of the least “developed” countries. In the same year, the wealthiest 20% of humanity made up for 86% of private consumption expenditures, and global inequality has increased since 1998. And inequality isn’t just a global phenomenon; within the rich United States the top 1% of the population had more wealth than the bottom 95%. Economic inequality on this scale, and taken in the context of our

current borderless economy is no less a crisis than global warming. It precludes functioning democracy, encourages environmental destruction, and undermines respect for human rights. In the simplest terms, our current global economy is deeply unjust; taken in broader perspective, it is a moral manifestation of our complex social disintegration. We believe that study abroad should deliberately address issues of economic injustice and disparity, and that we should push our students to analyze their own relative “wealth” more critically.

Climate change, environmental disruption, economic inequality, increased population pressure, and resource scarcity exacerbate political and economic divisions. In a 2004 report, U.S. Defense Department writers warned of a looming “global catastrophe.”<sup>13</sup> Their prognosis was bleak: nuclear proliferation will intensify and the use of such weapons in wars over resources would cost millions of lives: riots and civil disturbances will accompany the disintegration of infrastructure: rising sea levels will drown cities and create catastrophic refugee flows; low-lying population centers such as Manhattan and Bangladesh would cease to exist as we know them. Europe and the United States, they wrote, will retreat to “virtual fortresses” as their governments try to protect resources from “outside” threat. “Disruption and conflict,” write the authors of the report, “will be endemic features of life. Once again, warfare would define human life.” The report goes on to suggest that the “war on terror” is really a minor symptom of a world order spiraling out of control. We believe that study abroad should address such issues as propaganda, identity management, border definition and control, racism, and religious fundamentalism critically and deliberately.

We believe that study abroad can do more to *respond* to these crises, and, moreover, that it has the *responsibility* to do so. We also believe that study abroad has qualities unique in U.S. education that make it ideally suited to bear such responsibilities. We propose a new rubric for study abroad, a rubric based not on class reproduction, idealist internationalism or political internationalism, but one based on shared risk and responsibility. We call it “Critical Study Abroad.” It is not a stunning innovation; Critical Study Abroad and its explication here reflect what we see as an emerging trend in the field, a trend that is in need of articulation.

## **Critical Study Abroad and Nine Responses to Global Crisis**

Study abroad is only a minor part of post-secondary education in the United States; something on the order of one to four percent of U.S. students study abroad, depending on the definition of “study abroad program.” Yet as

we have shown, study abroad holds an important place in the symbolic landscape of the academy. It embodies the ideals of the liberal university and models the openness that is the signal characteristic of the academy. Study abroad is also, by virtue of its inherently interdisciplinary perspective, ideally suited to respond to global crises.

Study abroad, however, has been no less implicated in our crisis than any other area of study. We have been part of the problem—can we also be part of a solution? Clearly we cannot simply hope that *future* generations will make wiser decisions than we who came before them. As educators we have plenty to do: adopt new frameworks for analysis, commit ourselves to action, rigorously examine what we teach and how we teach it. Below we examine nine ways in which Critical Study Abroad can respond to global crisis.

### 1. Shift the Rhetoric: Spaceship Earth

For those who have seen the Earth from space, and for the hundreds and perhaps thousands more who will, the experience most certainly changes your perspective. The things that we share in our world are far more valuable than those which divide us.

Donald Williams, USA

We who work in the field of study abroad can begin simply—by replacing the rhetoric of “internationality” with one that is more realistic and more productive: we are all co-inhabitants of a *single* planet, a planet we are quickly destroying. As teachers and facilitators, we would do well to reconsider our traditional rhetoric of “international exchange” and replace it with one more precisely tailored to our condition. For our part, we have come to approach our work with a particular image in mind: the view of earth from the moon by Apollo 8 commonly known as “Earthrise.”

The moment captured in Earthrise is symbolic of a wider watershed in human history, a recognition, growing throughout the 20th century, that we share a small, fragile planet. Senator J. William Fulbright was one of the early visionaries of this movement, and it is by looking to him that we can begin to apply the spirit of Earthrise to study abroad. Fulbright approached and embraced international education as an idealist; he framed our goal as “the rapprochement of peoples,” which he argued “is only possible when differences of culture and outlook are respected and appreciated rather than feared and condemned, when the common bond of human dignity is recognized as the essential bond for a peaceful

world.”<sup>14</sup> Fulbright believed international education programs would contribute to the ascendancy of human dignity and peace. But as we demonstrated above, his words, and his idealism, have been replaced with a rhetoric that is more instrumental, prosaic, and nationalistic. Human solidarity and peace has been driven out by politicized talk of security and economic resilience.

This tension between the idealist and the political poles might explain why the field’s rhetoric *to students* concerning the goals of study is most often mum on politics but heavy on personal development, career skills and adventure. The political implications of what we are doing are either too disturbing or deemed too unattractive to college students, who, at best, are imagined to be concerned only about their survival in the global economy.

As a field, we need to make our implicit values—the reasons we do this work—explicit. We need to reassess our rhetoric, our program designs, our assessment outcomes. “Everybody,” wrote Žižek, “can imagine the end of the world, but nobody can imagine a different social order.”<sup>15</sup> We have to.

## **2. Study the “Borders”**

Since its inception, study abroad has approached its work with an explicitly “international” perspective. When we send students to “Spain” to study “Spanish Culture,” for example, we send them to learn a language that is often not only *not* the first native language of the local population<sup>16</sup>, but one that is widely considered to be a cultural intrusion from the long-dominant Castilla and its metropole, Madrid. In other words, we encourage our students to accept uncritically and reproduce the nation-state system.

We find such an approach to be counterproductive. We recommend instead that students pay closer attention to “borders,”<sup>17</sup> “contact-zones,”<sup>18</sup> and “liminal spaces.”<sup>19</sup> Our interest in boundaries and areas of ambiguous identification arises from work in cultural anthropology particularly during the past decade. Increasingly, cultural anthropologists have rejected the notion of fixed and bounded cultural groups, and have instead turned to examine cases in which culture and cultural identification are contested. Work on “ethnoscapes,”<sup>20</sup> “cultural flow fields,”<sup>21</sup> and the “invention”<sup>22</sup> of culture is now fairly standard in anthropology. Such work is particularly useful not only because it reminds us of the “imagined” nature of nationalism, but also because it highlights the artificiality of responsibility’s limits.

Just as the view of earth from space can challenge us to re-imagine ourselves and our relationships with others and with the world, examining the international system from its borders challenges us to reevaluate our assumptions

about culture and responsibility. At the borders, the “lines” between self and the other, between “us” and “them,” between “ours” and “theirs,” begin to look less sure and less necessary.

One example of the kind of work we imagine is that conducted by Rikke Kolbech-Anderson, who led a study tour to the Danish-German border region. Here she speaks to the utility of problematizing the border specifically and the modern nation in general as subjects of study:

We visited the German minority in Southern Denmark, and the Danish minority in Northern Germany, two bi-lingual and bi-cultural communities. This highlighted some very interesting aspects of cultural identity; for example, on the German side, a young person’s parents might both be German, yet this person may identify with, and feel part of, the Danish minority and may choose to go to a local Danish school. Some Danish minority students we met up with south of the border told us how they feel more German when they’re in Denmark and more Danish when they’re in Germany. And then there are, of course, clear generational differences; for example, whether you experienced the war or not. So, the constructivist understanding of culture, which we usually have a really hard time making the students grasp, made complete sense to them. And they saw how national culture may not always be the most determining one.<sup>23</sup>

Of course, borders are not the only areas where complex identities are evident. Such *contact zones*, defined by Mary Louise Pratt as “social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power,”<sup>24</sup> can be found everywhere, in classrooms, in industry, in government, but they are especially visible in the cities that frequently host our students. In many modern cities, however, contact zones have often been relegated to peripheral areas, or they have been effectively hidden from view. Many cities have attempted to diminish the power of the contact zone by creating coherent middle-class oriented tourist “city centers” or pedestrian zones cleansed of threatening elements, and it is often these “theme park” cities that our students experience. If we are successfully to put study abroad to critical use, we will need to work with students to “see” and “read” such transformations of urban topography.

Critical Study Abroad calls upon educators to embrace a complex view of culture, identity, and locality, and to recognize the pedagogical value of the contact zone. In practical terms, this means reorganizing our work to include

border studies, and to illuminate the ways that the ongoing process of bordering takes place even in national centers.

### **3. Value the Local**

Study abroad, with its long-standing emphasis on the nation state as the primary unit of analysis, has tended to obscure local specificity, and with it local conflict and contestation. We propose instead that study abroad programs encourage students to attend to the interactions among global and local forces, and in particular that they highlight the ways such conflicts emerge in locally specific forms.

As many scholars have noted, our age is characterized by the dynamic interaction of global and local forces. As Benjamin Barber describes it, for example, forces of globalization push “forward,” while forces of nationalism, as well as a complex of more localized or diffuse forces, push “back.”<sup>25</sup> At stake is power and control. In his analysis, Barber focuses on the interplay between globalizing and localizing forces, and between governments and corporations.

We think study abroad programs would do well to create programs that encourage students to be aware of such interactions. In such programs, students would come to understand the power of local action and struggle, and moreover, would come to see themselves as impacting local communities, an awareness surprisingly rare among students.

One program that focuses on local culture and its interactions with global forces, including study abroad itself, is the CIEE program in Guanajuato, Mexico directed by Karen and Eduardo Rodriguez. “We try to see the education flowing in multiple directions and to conceive of everyone as stakeholders and active teachers/learners no matter what role they are formally ‘assigned,’” Karen writes. The directors discuss the long-term impact of placing students with host families, and conduct regular meetings with teaching staff to attend to their own daily encounters with the “other” in their classrooms.

To counterbalance the tendency of educators in the field to rely on a “top 10 list” of texts for the analysis of culture, Karen introduces students to as much “local intellectual content” as possible, including local writers and critics who have not been widely published. Class speakers are chosen from a wide variety of roles, including many not often privileged in academic discourse. In addition, the program faculty actively encourage their students to take charge of their own immersion in and learning about local culture through creative writing and art projects, and they routinely include host families in presentations and exhibitions.

In short, the Guanajuato Program encourages students to value local communities as sources of power and knowledge.

#### 4. Examine Contemporary Culture

Many study abroad professionals like to distance their work from mere “tourism” and “travel,” but that distinction is not clearly drawn for many students. Whether we like it or not, we practice study abroad in the wider context of the travel and tourism industry, one of the largest industries on the planet: its rhetoric, prejudices and injustices therefore impact the educational goals students set for themselves. Students with the wherewithal and privilege to study abroad often have considerable travel experience, and with that, much of the ideological constructs of the travel industry.

Tourism is often framed equally in geographic and temporal terms; travel is “like stepping back in time,” to cultures and places “untouched by the centuries,” in “lands of age-old traditions.” These formulations encourage our students to understand culture in terms of modernity and pre-modernity, terms of temporal difference that occlude economic and political inequality.<sup>26</sup>

The tourist industry often reduces a “country” to one or two talking-points. “Australia is the land of the unexpected” announces the official website of the tourism office,<sup>27</sup> though further clicking reveals that they largely mean nature and Aboriginal scenery. Germany, to take another example, is cast by its own tourist organization in this light:

Vibrant cities with amazing architecture, fabulous shopping and pulsating nightlife. Enchanting medieval villages and traditional wine villages with friendly festivals and regional specialities. Picturesque countryside which is perfect for walking or simply relaxing in. Castles, palaces and abbeys that are the epitome of German romanticism. Fun & sport, wellness & relaxation. A land of a thousand possibilities.<sup>28</sup>

One of the most egregious errors we can make is to offer uncritically this static, reductionist, and idealized notion of culture to students. Instead, we would do better to sensitize our students to dynamic relations among local groups and interests. The program in Guanajuato is once again illustrative of how we might go about this. They write:

Guanajuato is idyllic in many ways, so we try to complicate the postcard view by bringing in different experiences, often related to class, educational

levels, etc. We compare the packaged images of culture used to promote tourism to actual daily life and talk a lot about absences and silences in all this. And we talk about which images get to the U.S. and which don't, and why this might be the case.<sup>29</sup>

When students have the opportunity to analyze and discuss local cultures and their representation (and misrepresentation) they begin to build a theoretical framework not only of cultural complexity, but also of the layers of interaction and representation in which they themselves participate—whether through exchange, emotional investment, or even mere speech.

An important part of the study of “local” culture is the study of “minor” languages. While as study abroad professionals we tend to value language training and acquisition, we have just as often given priority to national languages, even to the point of ignoring language conflict altogether. Overwhelmingly, the languages we speak and teach are the colonial languages of French, German, Spanish, and to a lesser extent Portuguese, Russian, and Mandarin. While each of these languages (including English) allows for discourses both local and global, amalgamating and liberating, their pre-eminence obscures and actively destroys much of the world's linguistic diversity. Linguists warn that in the next century, 50 to 90% of the world's distinct languages will disappear with little or no documentation. While we do not think that language, in itself, is sacred, we do note that language extinction is an indicator of cultural conquest, and that such conquests are routinely associated with human tragedy. We note as well that when languages die, they often take with them whole domains of knowledge. This aspect of global crisis, we believe, should concern all study abroad professionals, and should compel us to reinvigorate our efforts in non-traditional locations and the study of “small languages,” and it should influence the ways we talk about culture.

## **5. Empower and Inspire Students to Action**

Much of the learning that happens abroad is experiential in nature, and it is often beyond the capacity of teachers to shape or control. So how can we help students make the most of their experience? Here are some simple suggestions: schedule more class-time; schedule more extracurricular activities; create improved structure and accountability for student-led inquiry. Critical Study Abroad calls us to empower students to take responsibility for their own learning as a way of recognizing that, as educators, we are only one part of a more complex set of exchange relationships.

Anthony Ogden has recently defended the value of anthropology-developed ethnography as a tool for analyzing these relationships in all study abroad settings.<sup>30</sup> Traditionally, if study abroad programs taught students anything about methods of cross-cultural study, it was a form of “*participant observation*,” but the emphasis was on *observation*. The approach has reinforced students’ feelings of being outsiders of no consequence to their host culture, and it plays into the “consumer of culture” model propagated by the tourist industry.

Critical Study Abroad, by contrast, looks to Participatory Action Research, or PAR, an anthropological methodology that stresses action and reflection in a holistic cycle.<sup>31</sup> Kemmis and McTaggart define PAR as “collective, self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social...practices”<sup>32</sup> Unlike traditional approaches to knowledge production, PAR stresses collaboration among participants involved in study. Instead of “researcher” and “subject,” PAR poses all participants in the epistemological project as equally responsible, equally powerful, and that the knowledge produced be deliberately shaped to the benefit of the community.

To fully implement PAR, students, host families, local and visiting instructors are all envisioned as “co-researchers,” with the *facilitation of the learning process* being the key role for a “teacher.”<sup>33</sup> PAR has important potential for work in study abroad that empowers local communities, and it has already been widely applied in programs focusing on adult-education, at-risk youth, and in international development settings.<sup>34</sup>

## 6. Emphasize Responsibility

Study abroad is not free. But much of its cost is neither calculated nor made public, nor is it apparent to students who study abroad. How, we wonder, can students learn to act responsibly if they are protected from realizing the direct and indirect costs of their education? To take a specific example, study abroad contributes to global climate change through its role in the emission of CO<sub>2</sub>, a major greenhouse gas.<sup>35</sup> Study abroad adds to each individual’s *carbon debt*—a concept that will surely play a crucial role in changing human behaviors towards more sustainable practices in the coming century. And yet it’s likely that as practitioners and frequent fliers ourselves, we never pause to consider this impact and the responsibility it might entail, or to ask our students to consider these issues. Study abroad providers, colleges, and universities, as well as participating students, should be involved in carbon offsetting programs as a minimum-level commitment to environmental principals. Offsetting involves voluntarily paying small fees, calculated by distance and mode of travel, to

programs that mitigate carbon emissions (reforestation, for example). Living Routes, for example, a study abroad program we discuss in greater detail below, has made great advances towards its goal of making its programs carbon-neutral through the already-existing carbon offsetting programs.<sup>36</sup>

Study abroad is a considerable privilege—likely less than 4% of four-year college students have access to the opportunity to live and learn in a foreign community as part of their educational careers. Given this fact, and given the small number of passport-holders in the U.S. as a whole, our students abroad are a fortunate few. Many of them treat study abroad as a right and an entitlement, but not one that entails responsibility. As practitioners, we haven't asked enough of students.

Critical Study Abroad asks students to consider the resources that contribute towards their experiences, and it encourages them to consider not only what they *have been given*, but also *what they owe*. How can they pay back this debt—to their communities, institutions, the environment? It is up to us to help students reframe their experiences, and to provide them with opportunities to give back. We have begun this process simply by helping students reframe their experiences *for others* through publication and public presentations to the wider community, and by helping us prepare future study abroad students. We recognize that the work we describe is only a beginning. As we consider new ways to reshape our program, we see how we have built a culture of consumption, rather than responsibility, into the institutions of our program. We have had to start rethinking our project from the ground up.<sup>37</sup> One way we have approached the problem conceptually is by rethinking the notion of “global competence.”

Critical Study Abroad draws a sharp distinction between *global competence*, which it rejects, and *global citizenship*, which it embraces. On the Hobart and William Smith Colleges campus, the staff of the Center for Global Education has recently articulated a vision of Global Citizenship that we intend to use as a framework for future planning and a catalyst for institutional change:<sup>38</sup>

Global education can easily provide “worlds of experience.” But how do we inspire our students to live “lives of consequence”? Consequence implies something more than success in the global economy. It implies a contribution that outlasts the contributor.

A life of consequence demands the **wisdom** to perceive the interconnectivity of all life and living, the **courage** to embrace and learn from difference, not fear or deny it, and the **compassion** to maintain an imaginative empathy that reaches beyond one's immediate surroundings and extends to those in distant places.

A life of consequence demands Global Citizenship.

Global Citizens have a commitment to service and action, at the local and global levels.

Global Citizens understand themselves and their home culture.

Global Citizens have an in-depth understanding of another culture.

Global Citizens can work across these cultures with facility and ease.

Global Citizens understand that culture is constantly changing.

Global Citizens seek in other cultures solutions to problems that may transform their own.

Global Citizens understand the human place in the complex ecosystem of the planet.

Global Citizens feel compelled to work towards genuine understanding among peoples and actively work across lines of class, culture and nationality to solve the challenges facing the whole of humanity.

Lastly, Global Citizens are critically reflective. They are trained participant observers.

We can privilege our students with worlds of opportunity: can we inspire them to lives of consequence as global citizens?

There are several significant ways in which Global Citizenship differs from Global Competency. Recent focus group research has shown that the term “global competency” is seen as subservient to national identity and interest.<sup>39</sup> The authors of the study contextualize global competence within two familiar frameworks: national security and personal development. Global competence is crucial in these contexts because, the authors wrote, “it informs the ways in which we encourage and train people to interact with, and open themselves to, other cultures and to build the relationship capital that makes the exercise of sharp power less likely.”<sup>40</sup>

For study abroad to respond effectively to global crisis, it cannot be tied to rubrics of national dominance, whether defined as military power, business success or even cultural influence. Critical Study Abroad works to educate global citizens who have the skills and understandings of the “globally competent,” but who frame them with respect to the values of local community and human solidarity.

## **7. Pose Study Abroad as a Search for Solutions**

As we described earlier, study abroad has served a number of projects; it has been used to reproduce class, to support idealist internationalism, to increase U.S. economic competitiveness, and to support a “global war on terror.” Study

Abroad, then, is often posed as a solution to difficult social problems—How shall we reproduce class? How shall we encourage understanding? How shall we increase competitiveness?

Human societies meet their needs in different ways, and each is guided in doing so by unique histories, values and environmental constraints. How each society answers such questions as, *How do we relate to 'others' at home and abroad?* and *How do we relate to the living ecosystems we inhabit?* should be a major focus of every study abroad program. Sensitized to examine culture within social, historical, economic and particularly environmental frameworks, students will be encouraged to “bring back” with them not just photo-albums, journals and memories, but examples of how local cultures respond to the challenges we all face. To encourage this kind of reflection, we encourage study abroad participants to attend more carefully to local creativity, and to the different ways societies attempt to solve their dilemmas.

Scandinavian countries have traditionally been looked to as a source of successful progressive social policies. Denmark, for example, has made significant progress in reducing dependence on fossil fuels, and in ameliorating the ecological degradation caused by industrially-grounded lifestyles. The Danish have set in motion massive efforts at recycling, efficient and just communities, and wind energy. Critical study abroad would transform the experience of students studying in Denmark by asking them to consider Denmark's environmental approach and its connections to the nation's ongoing commitment to an effective welfare state. Students would be challenged to consider if Denmark's 'answers' might broaden and inspire public discourse in the U.S. and elsewhere.

At the same time, students should ask whether the Danish can learn anything from the United States' long and checkered experience with cultural diversity. Are there lessons to be found for the Danish? Is there a chance that our students can help transform discourse in Denmark? These are questions we believe would be pertinent for Critical Study Abroad.

## **8. Focus on the Relationship of Humans to their Environment**

Environmentalism and internationalism have both developed rapidly in recent years, and they have come to inform each other in profound ways. Today, historians, sociologists, anthropologists and biologists have inquired into the relationships between ecological realities and inter-human relations. By examining both inter-human and human-environmental relationships as two linked dynamics, we can assemble a picture of the current moment of crisis that is richer and more complex, more pragmatic and relevant.

Critical Study Abroad asks: How have cultures evolved in relationship to their environment? What are the environmental implications of particular practices and policies? What ideological configurations give shape to local understandings or the meanings embodied in terms glossed as “the environment”?

One study abroad program provider that opens a dialogue with environmentalists and historico-environmentalists (many of whom are also involved in major transnational movements) is Living Routes: Study Abroad in Ecovillages. Living Routes programs bring forward this aspect of human life by taking advantage of the ecovillage movement, a sustainable community movement with examples around the world. The whole point of an ecovillage is to experiment consciously (and it is hoped, wisely) with the human-ecological relationship with the goal of long-term sustainability. By placing study abroad students in these communities, Living Routes immerses students in a subculture dedicated to self-reflexivity, positive change and democratic involvement of the whole population (including guests). Students take part in the reflexivity of the community itself, and the engagement of the community with the wider (and in some senses “outside”) culture of the host country. The levels of immersion and identity cannot but be made more complex and dynamic in this context, and Living Routes actively contextualizes its programs as a structure in which participants can “investigate personal and community based solutions to real world issues.”<sup>41</sup>

### **9. Encourage Student-Led Learning and Teaching**

Many students, whether “at home” or “abroad,” have difficulty functioning as active learners. Critical Study Abroad makes it a priority to develop students’ abilities to teach themselves and others, to create active and responsible educational participants. One program that does this is directed by Oscar Caballos at CIEE’s study center in Seville, Spain. Caballos has created a unique publication called *Mas+Menos* that pairs U.S. students studying on the CIEE program in Seville with students of translation at the University of Pablo de Olavide. The pairs are responsible for researching and writing articles published in both English and Spanish, and aimed mainly at a local audience (both Sevillanos and internationals). The program is designed such that neither participant is privileged: the Spanish and U.S. students co-conduct research (including interviews, background reading and site visits), produce a single outline of an article, and then write it independently (though collaboratively) in both English and Spanish. For the participants, the process is complex: they approach their topics as a journalistic team and as individuals with unique backgrounds and cultural identities.

*Mas+Menos* is a good example of applied Critical Study Abroad because of its focus on contemporary issues. The first two issues focused the student experiences in Seville and the concept of “fiesta,” a staple theme in cross-cultural learning about Spain. In the lead-up to creating its third issue, however, Oscar wanted to refocus the magazine on the locality of Seville as a living, dynamic community. Issue 3 examined the Guadalquivir River as a focal point for daily life in the city and as an environmental issue. Issue 4 examined the changing role of women in Spain. Issues Five and Six examined the flows of people and culture in a globalized Spain, focusing on the evolving relationship between Spain and Morocco, including the sensitive topic of Moroccan immigration to Spain. The latest issue explores the lives of the blind and visually impaired in Spain. The group of journalists (including a visually-impaired translation student) joined some of the blind as they “viewed” and interpreted Picasso’s *Guernica*. By blurring the relationships among journalists, translators and subjects, *Mas+Menos* inspires all participants in the process to be at once students and teachers.

*Mas+Menos* also testifies to the power of publishing—to motivate student self-learning, and to offer new knowledge to a wider audience. Produced in Spanish and English (and recently, Braille), *Mas+Menos* contributes to an inclusive and critical cross-cultural dialogue. It brings a wide variety of people together in the work of cultural understanding. It helps students reframe their experiences as more than “self-development.”

Another example of this is a program at Hobart and William Smith that funds a series of student-created ‘zines,’ or self-published magazines.<sup>42</sup> When students return from abroad, they edit and layout their zine; once its printed, it is distributed widely across campus and further afield. Although the printing and production values are low (as is the cost), the content is first-rate and the local impact of the zines is considerable. The power of something done by students, for themselves, their peers, and for wider audiences, cannot be underestimated. The appeal is strong in a society where the storytelling function has been co-opted by industries, and the effect on student development when they realize that their own story (knowledge production) has credibility and relevance to others, is substantially positive.

All of these efforts aim to engage students as *teachers*, and to see that their learning, no matter how personally “enriching,” to show that learning is more than personal property is a responsibility.

## Conclusion: Critical Study Abroad, An Epistemology of Risk

In this essay we have called for a new way of framing the work of study abroad. We argue that study abroad should deliberately position itself as an activist force in the service of global survival. We have proposed a number of ways programs can shape their work to achieve this important goal. We want to point out here that the changes we propose reach deeper than program organization; at the core of our vision is a reconceptualization of the work of knowing—an epistemological revision. At issue is that our traditions of learning and knowing are predicated on the dominance of knowers over that which they seek to know. The relation holds across the academy, but it is particularly relevant, and detrimental, in the human sciences, where the “object” of knowledge is another person or culture.<sup>44</sup> Historically, as philosopher Charles Taylor has put it, “transcultural study becomes a field for the exercise of ethnocentric prejudice.”<sup>45</sup> *Their* culture is *different*; *our* culture is *superior*. In the past, knowledge in the human sciences was to a large extent shaped by structures of domination; European cultures, by virtue of their power, could afford “the luxury of ethnocentricity.”<sup>46</sup> But such ethnocentrism has not gone unchallenged. Across the human sciences, in which we include study abroad, the assumption that each culture deserves to be understood, or, as Clifford Geertz put it, “interpreted,” in its own terms, is now commonplace.<sup>47</sup> Thus we appear to be strung between, on one hand, understanding another culture through our own projections, and on the other, through that culture’s self-explanation. Neither is adequate.

In place of this dichotomy, we see possibility in what Charles Taylor has called a “language of perspicuous contrast,” a “language in which we could formulate both their way of life and ours as alternative possibilities in relation to some human constants at work in both.”<sup>48</sup> But what might such a “language” look like? And in what terms might such “contrast” be made visible? To what “human constants” might such a language refer?

A language of perspicuous contrast would be one that includes a shared set of referents reflected in a contested and developing vocabulary; such a language would produce a “discourse community” constituted through shared investment in its use. The terms of “contrast” for such a language, we believe, are rooted in *shared risk*, and the many approaches human beings have for understanding, assessing, and responding to risk. The relevant human constant is, quite simply, the *state of the world*. We no longer have the luxury of power; we can no longer claim that the world is so large that it can absorb infinite abuse. We wonder, even, how much longer it will be tenable to hold, as we have in the past, that the term “abroad” represents a meaningful difference; our responsibilities are truly global.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Joan Elias Gore, *Dominant Beliefs and Alternative Voices: Discourse, Belief, and Gender in American Study Abroad*, (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2005): 21.

<sup>2</sup>Gore 39.

<sup>3</sup>An interesting text from this period is John Hersey's 1945 novel *A Bell for Adano*. Hersey's story centered on a culturally-savvy military public affairs officer in charge of a small Italian town. Hersey suggested through this popular novel that it was a combination of American optimism with knowledge of (and respect for) local cultures that would represent the best diplomatic stance for the U.S. in the post-war period.

<sup>4</sup>Sister to City International website history: [www.sister-cities.org/sci/aboutsci/history](http://www.sister-cities.org/sci/aboutsci/history)

<sup>5</sup>People to People International website history: [www.ptpi.org/about\\_us/History.aspx](http://www.ptpi.org/about_us/History.aspx)

<sup>6</sup>William Hoffa, "A History of Study Abroad: Beginnings to 1965:" 108.

<sup>7</sup>David Engerman, "Rethinking Cold War Universities: Some Recent Histories," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 2003: 80–95.

<sup>8</sup>John Coyne "Establishing the Peace Corps," Peace Corps Writers.org, November, 1999. [www.peacecorpswriters.org/pages/1999/9911/911pchist.html](http://www.peacecorpswriters.org/pages/1999/9911/911pchist.html)

<sup>9</sup>This tension is not new: Hoffa reports that Fulbright tenaciously fought 1948 legislation that attempted to link the battery of international exchange programs he helped create to specific foreign policy goals of the US government. See Hoffa, 114–115.

<sup>10</sup>"Global Competence and National Needs: One Million Americans Studying Abroad," (Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program, 2005): v–vi.

<sup>11</sup>Ronald Wright, *A Short History of Progress*, (Toronto: Anansi, 2004): 21.

<sup>12</sup>The UN Human Development reports are available online at : [hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1998/](http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1998/)

<sup>13</sup>Peter Schwartz and Doug Randall, "An Abrupt Climate Change Scenario and Its Implications for United States National Security" (Department of Defense, 2003) available at [www.grist.org/news/muck/2004/02/25/pentagoners/](http://www.grist.org/news/muck/2004/02/25/pentagoners/)

<sup>14</sup> From remarks upon receiving the Athinai International Prize awarded by the Alexander S. Onassis Foundation, Athens, April 1989, reprinted in "Quotes from Senator J. William Fullbright," at [www.fulbright.org/ifad/manual/quotes.pdf](http://www.fulbright.org/ifad/manual/quotes.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Rebecca Mead, *The Marx Brother: How a philosopher from Slovenia became an international star*, *The New Yorker*, May 5th, reprinted in the journal *Lacanian Ink* at [www.lacan.com/ziny.htm](http://www.lacan.com/ziny.htm)

<sup>16</sup> Barcelona in Catalunya, San Sebastian in Pais Vasco or Santiago in Galicia

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Marshall Sahlins, *Boundaries: the Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), Daphne Berdahl, *Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) and John Borneman, *Belonging in the Two Berlins: Kin, State, Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>18</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone" *Profession 91* (New York: MLA, 1991): 33–40. [www.nwe.ufl.edu/~stripp/2504/pratt.html](http://www.nwe.ufl.edu/~stripp/2504/pratt.html)

<sup>19</sup> See Berdahl.

<sup>20</sup> Arjun Appadurai, "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology," *Recapturing Anthropology*. (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991): 191–210.

<sup>21</sup> Stefan Senders, personal communication, 1996.

<sup>22</sup> See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London: Verso Books, 1991).

<sup>23</sup> Rebecca Kolbech Anderson, personal communication, January 18, 2007. Kolbech Anderson co-taught the course "Communication Across Cultures in Europe" with Anne Mette Christiansen, for Denmark's International Study Program (DIS) in the Fall of 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Pratt 36. Karen Rodriguez further writes that "What we see in the contact zone, then, is not a simple struggle between the powerful and the powerless, but rather, a range of people resisting othering processes...at the local, domestic, binational and global levels. Everyone is representing and being represented..." See Karen Rodriguez, "Re-reading Student Texts: Intertextuality and Constructions of Self and Other in the Contact Zone," *Frontiers*, (Fall 2006): 45.

<sup>25</sup> Benjamin Barber, *Jihad Versus McWorld* (New York: Times Books, 1995). We resist many of the assumptions embodied in Barber's metaphors, but we postpone that discussion for another time and place.

<sup>26</sup> The role of temporality in the production of knowledge about culture has been widely discussed in anthropology, most notably by Johannes Fabian (1983).

<sup>27</sup> [unexpectedaustralia.asiaone.com/00\\_main/main.php](http://unexpectedaustralia.asiaone.com/00_main/main.php).

<sup>28</sup> "Destination Germany" [www.germany-tourism.de/ENG/destination\\_germany/master.htm](http://www.germany-tourism.de/ENG/destination_germany/master.htm)

<sup>29</sup> Karen Rodriguez, email exchange, January 31, 2007.

<sup>30</sup> Anthony Ogden, "Ethnographic Inquiry: Reframing the Learning Core of Education Abroad," *Frontiers*, Fall 2006: 87–112.

<sup>31</sup> See for example, Davydd J. Greenwood "Participatory Action Research as a Process and as a Goal," *Human Relations*, 1993: 175–192.

<sup>32</sup> S. Kemmis and R. McTaggart, eds. *The Action Research Planner*, (Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press, 1988): 5.

<sup>33</sup> Loretta Ishida conducted a study in 1999 of an ecotourism outfit in rural Mexico, using PAR methods extensively. Her thesis, including conclusions about ecotourism that are easily applicable to many study abroad situations, is available online at [www.msu.edu/user/ishidalo/title.htm](http://www.msu.edu/user/ishidalo/title.htm)

<sup>34</sup> Participatory Video is one inspiring application of PAR methodology that also might have applications to study abroad programs, especially since many of them are incorporating media projects like documentary filmmaking to their syllabi. Insight, an organization dedicated to PV, has more information: [www.insightshare.org](http://www.insightshare.org)

<sup>35</sup> Airline travel uses about as much gas per person as car travel does, except the distances are much longer. Additional emissions of nitrous oxide and other greenhouse gases make the environmental impact of airline flight 2.5 times greater than just the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would indicate.

<sup>36</sup> Living Routes recently hosted a meeting of its participants in Thailand and tried to make the event "carbon neutral" by calculating the carbon emissions made by participant travel and off-setting it through corresponding donations to a tree-planting initiative in Thailand. This doesn't reduce dependency on fossil fuels, it does mitigate the effects and raises awareness of the problem.

<sup>37</sup> We have discussed this in other articles: "The Promise of Integrated Program Design" Thomas J. D'Agostino, Stefan Senders, and Doug Reilly. *IIE Networker*—Institute of International Education (2006), and "Writers' Workshop for Returned Students," Doug Reilly and Stefan Senders. In *Transitions Abroad*, (2006).

<sup>38</sup> Obviously the tenor of this working paper resonates with many of the recommendations of Critical Study Abroad as the two pieces were prepared in concert as part of a longer process of institution-wide reflection and planning.

<sup>39</sup> Bill Hunter, George P. White and Galen C. Godbey, "What Does It Mean To Be Globally Competent?" *Journal of Studies in International Education*, (Fall 2006): 267–285.

<sup>40</sup> Similar constructs, we note, have led commentators to embrace the "liberation" of Iraq. Michael Ignatieff wrote in a 2005 op-ed in the *New York Times*: "A relativist America is properly inconceivable. Leave relativism, complexity and

realism to other nations. America is the last nation left whose citizens don't laugh out loud when their leader asks God to bless the country and further its mighty work of freedom. It is the last country with a mission, a mandate and a dream, as old as its founders. All of this may be dangerous, even delusional, but it is also unavoidable. It is impossible to think of America without these properties of self-belief." If this is true, then what of the idea of ethno-relativism as a goal of international education? (*New York Times Magazine*, June 26, 2005, available online at [www.ksg.harvard.edu/ksgnews/Features/opeds/062605\\_ignatieff.htm](http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/ksgnews/Features/opeds/062605_ignatieff.htm))

<sup>41</sup> Living Routes website, [www.livingroutes.org](http://www.livingroutes.org)

<sup>42</sup> 'Zines' were born with the democratization of print media that came with inexpensive photocopiers. A good online clearinghouse of information on zines and their history is *The Book of Zines*, [www.zinebook.com](http://www.zinebook.com)

<sup>44</sup> This hierarchy and its implications for anthropological knowledge production are discussed at greater length in Stefan Senders and Allison Truitt, eds. *Money: Ethnographic Encounters* (New York: Palgrave, 2007).

<sup>45</sup> Charles Taylor "Understanding and Ethnocentricity," *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1985): 124.

<sup>46</sup> Taylor 130.

<sup>47</sup> Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

<sup>48</sup> Taylor 125.

## References

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso, 1991.
- Appadurai, Arjun. "Global Ethnoscapes: Notes and Queries for a Transnational Anthropology." *Recapturing Anthropology*. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991. 191–210.
- Barber Benjamin. *Jihad Versus McWorld*. New York: Times Books, 1995.
- Engerman, David. "Rethinking Cold War Universities: Some Recent Histories." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 2003: 80–95.
- Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- Gore, Joan Elias. *Dominant Beliefs and Alternative Voices: Discourse, Belief, and Gender in American Study Abroad*. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2005.
- Greenwood, Davydde. "Participatory Action Research as a Process and as a Goal," *Human Relations* 1993: 175–192.
- Hoffa, William. "A History of Study Abroad: Beginnings to 1965," *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 2007
- Kemmis, S. and R. McTaggart, eds. *The Action Research Planner*. Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press, 1988.
- Ogden, Anthony. "Ethnographic Inquiry: Reframing the Learning Core of Education Abroad." *Frontiers* Fall 2006: 87–112.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession* 1991: 33–40.
- Reilly, Douglas and Stefan Senders. "Writers' Workshop for Returned Students." *Transitions Abroad* 2006: 80–81.
- Senders, Stefan and Allison Truitt, eds. *Money: Ethnographic Encounters*. New York: Palgrave, 2007.
- Taylor, Charles. "Understanding and Ethnocentricity," *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Wright, Ronald. *A Short History of Progress*. Toronto: Anansi, 2004